

Visibility Should Help Decrease Nearly 21,000,000 Related Medical Visits Annually

Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson (IL-11) hopes that the 21,000,000 yearly medical visits related to home safety issues will see a decrease with the recent passage of her House Resolution on home safety. The resolution (HR. Res. 543) passed yesterday with bi-partisan support of 111 co-sponsors including Henry Waxman, Energy and Commerce Committee chair and Frank Pallone Subcommittee on Health chair. It also designates June as Home Safety Month.

“While I hope to increase visibility on home safety issues through today’s resolution, it is my intent that awareness continues throughout the year,” said Halvorson. “

According to recent research from the Home Safety Council, there are not only a large number of medical visits that effect American households annually, but nearly 20,000 die from unintentional home injuries each year as well. The top five causes of these types of deaths are falls, poisoning, fire/burns, choking/suffocation, and drowning/submersion.

“Awareness of home safety issues is important - life is too precious to not pay attention and the result would most certainly reduce injury and death,” said Halvorson. “Falls are the leading cause of death for older adults in the home - and it is estimated that total direct costs associated with both fatal and non-fatal falls is more than \$19 billion annually for hospitalization, emergency department visits, and outpatient care.”

Following falls, poisonings are the second leading cause of home injuries triggering nearly 5,000 deaths a year, with fire and burn injuries coming in third with almost 65% of home fires resulting in death. Unintentional choking and suffocation are the fourth leading cause of home injury death, while drowning comes in fifth.

“While a good start, this resolution is just a beginning,” added Halvorson. “I applaud our nonprofit organizations for their ongoing commitment to keep families safe in their homes and personally thank the Home Safety Council for their efforts.

The Home Safety Council is at www.homesafetycouncil.org .